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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/692,045	10/20/2000	Kenji Kira	Q61394	5301

7590 06/16/2004

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EXAMINER

LEE, TOMMY D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2624

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2004

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/692,045	KIRA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Thomas D. Lee	2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Specification

2. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
4. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. (Note boldfacing of words or letters added for emphasis)

Claims 1 and 4 each recite "a signal processing section for adding the output of the calculating section to the input signal to provide a wrinkle enhanced signal, and for subtracting **it** from the input signal to provide a smooth skin image." (lines 6-9 of claim 1, and lines 9-12 of claim 4) It is unclear whether **it** refers to the output of the calculating section or the wrinkle enhanced signal.

Claim 2 is indefinite for depending from indefinite claim 1. Furthermore, the last line of claim 2 reads, "F(x) is a nonlinear function, in which F(x) = 0 when $|X| > \varepsilon_0$." Upper case X is not defined in the claim, and thus it is unclear whether a typographical error was made or if upper case X is a variable that belongs in the claim.

Claim 3 recites "a calculating section for calculating the small-amplitude variation component of the image by a **small ε value**, given as ε_h ," (lines 5-7) and "a calculation section for calculating the minute-amplitude variation component of the input image by a **minute ε value** given as ε_1 less than ε_h ." (lines 14-16) It is unclear what "calculating ... by a small ε value" or "calculating ... by a minute ε value" means.

Claim 4 recites "the **second** ordinary ε -filter." (line 16) It is unclear whether there is a second ordinary ε -filter other than the ordinary ε -filter block recited at line 2. Furthermore, the claim recites "a minute amplitude component adjustment section for adding or subtracting the **secondary block's** output to or from the **primary block's** output ..." (lines 23-28) Which of the extended and ordinary ε -filter blocks is the primary block, and which is the secondary block?

Claim 5 recites "a signal processing section for adding or subtracting the variation component to or from the input signal according to **the instruction from the correction instruction section ...**" (lines 7-12) There is no prior indication in the claim of an instruction being performed, nor is there any prior mention of a correction instruction section. This recitation lacks antecedent basis.

5. The claim language is indefinite to the extent that the examiner cannot draw any meaningful conclusion as to the allowability of the claims. A determination will be made

once the claims have been rewritten to overcome the indefiniteness issues outlined above.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas D. Lee whose telephone number is (703) 305-4870. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (7:30-5:00), alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on (703) 308-7452. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Thomas D. Lee
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2624

tdl
June 10, 2004